

ON THE TEMPERATURE OF THE BODY
OF ORNITHORHYNCHUS PARADOXUS. Blumenb.

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The low temperature of the body of *Echidna hystrix* (28° C. or 82°, 4 F.), (1) as compared with that of other mammals made me desirous of ascertaining also the temperature of *Ornithorhynchus paradoxus*. Through the kindness of Mr. Wm. Macleay, to whom a specimen of this animal has been sent alive from Penrith, I had the opportunity a few days ago of making the desired observation.

The elongated narrow bulb of a sensitive thermometer (2) having been introduced into the cloaca of the animal (a young ♂) the mercury gradually rose to 24°, 4 C. (or 75°, 9 F.), and remained stationary. The water in the tub in which the animal was kept, had a temperature under 23° C. (73°, 6 F.), and the temperature of the air in the room (observed with another thermometer) was 20°, C. (or 68° F.)

The thermometer having remained in the cloaca not more than two minutes, it appeared to me that a slight possibility of a higher temperature of the body of the *Ornithorhynchus* was not quite excluded. I was therefore very glad to have a chance of trying the same experiment again on the same animal two days later.

This time I let the thermometer remain in the cloaca, over 5 min. and obtained the temperature of 25° 2 C. (or 77° 3 F.), the temperature of the air being that afternoon 23° O. (73°, 6 F.), and of the water of the tub. 24° 3 C. (75° 8 F.)

(1.) My paper on the temperature of the body of *Echidna hystrix*. Cuv. Proceed. Linn. Soc. of N.S.W. Vol. 8, p. 425.

(2.) The scale of the thermometer used (of Patz and Foehr in Berlin), was divided into degrees (centigrade) from 24° to 46° C. The tenths of a degree were carefully and distinctly marked on the scale.

The animal being then in a dying condition, presenting no chance of living much longer, I made a small incision near the linea alba, and introduced the thermometer into the abdominal cavity. It then showed, after lying there for a few minutes, exactly the same temperature as in the cloaca (*i.e.*, $25^{\circ} 2$ C., or $77^{\circ} 3$ F.) Taking the mean of the two observations, the temperature of the body of *Ornithorhynchus paradoxus* is— $24^{\circ} 8$ C, or $76^{\circ} 6$ F.

NOTES AND EXHIBITS.

Mr. W. H. Caldwell, B.A., exhibited several specimens which he had recently obtained in Queensland, showing the stages in the development of the Monotremes from the laying of the egg to the hatching.

Mr. J. Mitchell of Bowring, exhibited a large number of Silurian fossils collected by him in the neighbourhood of Bowring. They consisted of a variety of Molluscs, Corals and about sixteen species of Trilobites. Among the Trilobites are *Phacops caudatus*, *P. longicaudatus*, *P. encrinurus punctatus*, and *P. Jamesii* (?), *Calymene* (*Lenaria* ?), *Harpes ungula*, *Staurocephalus Murchisonii*, *Bronteus*, and several of the genus *Acidaspis* one of which attained a considerable size. The molluscs included representatives of *Pentamerus*, *Orthoceras*, *Avicula*, *Strophomena*, &c.

Mr. Macleay exhibited a specimen of *Ophiophagus elaps*, a venomous snake of the Indian region, and the largest known species of the venomous Colubrine snakes. He had received it from the Rev. J. E. Tenison-Woods from Perak. The specimen measured 142 inches in length, but the species had been known to attain a length of 170 inches. As its name implies, it preys on other snakes, and its venom is so deadly, that it is said to kill a man in three minutes and an elephant in a couple of hours.